A STUDY ON COLOUR PSYCHOLOGY IN IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOUR IN THE APPAREL INDUSTRY

SYNOPSIS

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1. Introduction

Marketing can be considered, at its most basic level, as the activity of learning about the targeted consumers and developing and sustaining connections with them (Kotler et al., 2015). Marketing usually stands at the crossroads of business and consumer behaviour (Baines et al., 2017). The significance of consumer-oriented marketing is putting pressure on the conventional strengths of manufacturers as well as service organizations and is now posing new marketing dilemmas. To retain a sustained competitive edge, marketing-based businesses are compelled to utilize their elements to develop creative techniques to attract as well as offer value to customers (Dellaert, 2019).

In a competitive economic system, businesses are required to have accurate and detailed information about their customers for survival and growth. As a result, the concept of modern marketing emphasizes the importance of having detailed and well-founded information about the necessities, aspirations, attitudes, and behaviours of consumers (Mihart, 2012). The design of a retail environment is critical for eliciting the appropriate emotive reaction from customers and increasing purchase likelihood (Law et al., 2012). Consumer experiences with a product, context, and retailer form the basis of user experience in retail environments, which is comprehensive in character and includes cognitive, affective, emotional, social, and physical responses to the retail environment. Customer value is migrating away from products and services and is progressing towards experiences and interactions (Verhoef et al., 2009).

1.1 Role of colours as Marketing element

Sensory marketing has been considered as an effective marketing strategy that is facilitating businesses to increase product profitability. Sensory branding is regarded as a form of marketing that appeals to all of the human senses when it comes to the establishment of a brand (Erenkol & Merve, 2015). This kind of marketing connects with clients on an emotional level through the senses. In the marketing domain, the utilization of five senses serves to stimulate client emotions, and it is now essential for a firm to stand out from its rivals. As it is the most activated by the surroundings, sight is the most utilized sense in marketing. According to Khattak et. al., (2018), people form their opinion about a product within 90 seconds of viewing. 62 to 90% of the product consideration is based on colours alone (Gopikrishna & Kumar, 2015 in Khattak et al., 2018). Marketers are fully aware of the

importance of colour and shape in the creation of a product, the layout of a point of sale, and the execution of a promotion campaign as critical success (or failure) elements (Randhir et al., 2016). According to Labrecque & Milne (2012), companies utilize colour to establish and further develop an identity within the marketplace, which enables them to stand out from their competitors.

Hue, brightness, and saturation are all facets of colour. Colours are classified as cool or warm based. Violet and blue are good examples of cool colors since they tend to have shorter wavelengths. Warm colours, such as red and orange, are also characterized as colours and tend to have longer wavelengths. The impression of colour has been found to be influenced by brightness and saturation as well. The brightness of a colour is controlled by its lightness or darkness. Saturation on the other hand refers to the purity of colour: high saturation displays a pure color, whereas low saturation depicts a pale, grey color. An increase in these attributes makes colours seem more pleasant (Agrawal & Singh, 2017). In order to use colours effectively in marketing, marketers are required to first understand what feelings and needs each colour might elicit in their target audience. Colours tend to have different connotations in different cultures, hence, there is no universal meaning for any colour and can vary accordingly (Babolhavaeji et al., 2015).

1.2 Colour psychology and buying behavior

Colour is deemed to be among the most essential nonverbal indicators of items. Colour psychology is a vital area of psychology, that studies people's emotions and reactions to different colours. Certain colours elicit distinct human emotions, attitudes, and actions in diverse people (Bytyçi, 2020).Colours as the element from a marketing perspective are recognized to have a strong psychological influence on people's behavior and decisions, and it is observed that contemporary designers, as well as marketers alike, make use of this information (Khattak et al., 2018). If the right colours are selected then the brand colour may become the most significant and core part leading to sales.

The colours of things can lead customers to favor or hate the required products with comparable functionality and efficiency due to associative learning and personal preference. Individuals' preferred colour preferences are found to be influenced by their age and gender, making some of the items more appealing to specific groups of potential customers. Colour theories might help designers guarantee and ascertain that the most perfect colour patterns are utilized to maximize and appeal to their targeted

audience (Page et al., 2012). The colour triggers such emotions that it affects the consumers' buying behavior to such a higher level that it becomes an impulsive buying decision. It is seen that despite the not-so-good design of the product, the appropriate use of colour may easily persuade a buyer to gravitate toward the product. Combining form, function, aesthetics, and colour harmony in a single product stimulates the visual influence on customer decisions, which is critical in product design (Kumar, 2017). Colour psychology is used by marketing in product colour, packaging, logo and brand identity, and displays and layout of point of sale. Therefore, understanding colour psychology from a consumer behavior perspective and examining the factors related to colour triggers that which influences the consumers' decision to purchase products.

1.3 Importance of colour fashion trends and their lifecycle

In this section, the importance of colour is discussed from the marketing perspective, with a specific focus on advertising.

Advertising uses ‘colour’ to create in the consumer public two kinds of reactions: normal and psychological. Normal reactions relate to the individual's 'autonomous reactions' to colour which means colour factor is used to attract the public's attention to the advertising message. Psychological reactions records the feelings produced by the influence of colours which "depend on the individual characteristics of each person" to the extent that they cause "arbitrary symbolic associations".

Examining trends in colour fashion depicts that these trends are not the result of technological, economic or productive factors but are based on psychological factors which are stemming from the fact that individuals seek change as a means of personal expression as well as in their desire to feel part of a group. This is a part of the social process that includes the consequences of social interactions, diffusion, acceptance, or their rejection, as well as guidance factors.

The interest of advertisers in modern trends in fashion stems from their desire to appreciate the extent to which trends in colour preference may influence the hue and tone of the colours / colours used in the advertising message, either for reasons related to differentiating the product from the competition and avoiding the use of outdated colours, or because knowing the trends the preference of the different colours may determine the market group that is the main target of the product. The reason for the colour preference is the fact that consumers seek to achieve an individual differentiation by expressing

contemporary preferences in accordance with existing fashion.

1.4 Impulse Buying

Impulse buying has been defined by several researchers and been given various definitions. Impulse buying is an unplanned decision to buy a product or service, made just before a purchase. One who tends to make such purchases is referred to as an impulse purchaser or impulse buyer. Impulse buying, a type of consumer buying is an unplanned decision to buy a product or a service immediately, which is accompanied by emotions of "excitement and pleasure" (Beatty and Ferrell, 1998). It has complex implications for buying across different products and may be triggered by sensory and cognitive stimulation (Sharma et al, 2010).

Stern (1962) subdivided impulse buying into four categories - pure impulsive buying, suggested impulsive buying, reminder impulsive buying, and planned impulsive buying.

- Pure impulse buying is considered as true impulsive buying. It is a novelty or escape purchase where an emotional appeal sparks a desire to consume, which breaks a normal buying pattern.
- Reminder impulse buying results from a predetermined need that was prompted upon encountering the item while shopping.
- A suggested impulse buy occurs when a shopper sees an item for the first time and a desire to buy is formed without any prior knowledge of the product.
- Planned impulse buying occurs when the shopper enters the store with some specific purchase in mind; however the actual purchase depends upon price specials and coupon offers.

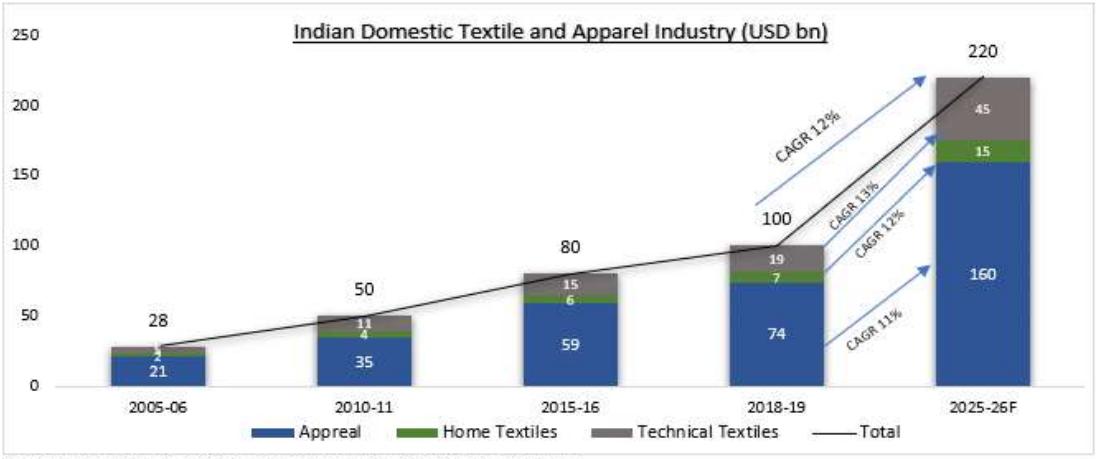
1.5 Apparel Industry in India

I. Apparel or readymade garments is the largest segment within the Indian textile and apparel industry which accounts for nearly three fourth of domestic market and approx. half of the total textile and apparel industry.

- In recent years, the Indian domestic market has outperformed in comparison to the world's largest textile and apparel consumption countries like EU and USA and registered a healthy CAGR of 10% between 2005-2017.

II. Growth in middle and lower middle-class with rising disposable income has led to continuous demand for textile and apparel in India. This growth is expected to continue in future and Indian

domestic textile and apparel market is estimated to reach USD 220 billion by 2025-26, growing at a CAGR of 12%



Source: Ministry of Textiles, Wazir Analysis, Televisory's Analysis

FIGURE 1 - GRAPH OF INDIAN APPAREL INDUSTRY

1. Literature Review

A literature review was conducted encompassing 33 papers published in 28 journals from google scholar and dimensions database for the period 2006 to 2022. Search key words were colour scheme, colour psychology, colour psychology and marketing, emotion, and impulse buying. The maximum number of papers were published in the year 2008 (7 papers). For the papers studied, the top 3 journals were Psychology and Marketing (3 papers), Food Quality and Preference (3 papers), and Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services (2 papers).

The literature review was conducted and led to four chevrons under which the literature could be affinitised. These encompassed Industry, Colour and consumer behaviour, colours in marketing and Emotions and consumer behaviour.

- Industry

Kim and Lee (2020) studied the association of background colours on the psychological processes of consumers in the food industry. They observed that consumers were more tempted when faced with red against blue or white background. With respect to the apparel industry, Le, Kohda and Huynh (2019) studied the clothing product attributes followed by prediction of consumer preference by attributes. Colour was observed to be one of the five criteria used by consumers. Tantanatewin and Inkarojrit (2018) studied the emotional response of consumers to colours of restaurant interiors

through a survey of 496 respondents.

Warm colour tones were observed to be associated with pleasure. Even the colours of bottled water packaging were observed to affect consumer behaviour, notably in Sub – Saharan Africa.

- Colour and Consumer Behaviour

Rathee and Rajain (2020), in an online study of colours in consumers observed that yellow colour was preferred the least and blue the most. Gender of the respondent had a role to play in the choice of colours. The psychological impact of colours and the process of consumer buying behaviour was studied through a descriptive survey method by Aghdaie and Honari (2014). The message conveyed by colours was observed by the researchers to be highly significant. Another study conducted by Broeder and Wildeman (2020) were able to show no direct influence of colours. The study involving 220 respondents observed that booking intentions of the store were not influenced by the red colour of the store. Hence, though there was no direct effect, there was only an indirect effect of red colour of the store through effect on pleasure emotion. Bahrainizad and Rajabi (2018) in a survey of 388 consumers in Iran observed that colour and size of the packaging did not impact product usability. Elmashhara and Soares (2019) observed a direct impact of positive attitude of towards colour schemes, mall lighting, scent and temperature on buyer satisfaction. In a 2022 study, the same authors, by utilizing the stimulus response theory investigated the buyer intention to stay at the mall and atmospheric cues (colour schemes, lighting and music). They observed that desire to stay mediated the relationship between buyer positive attitude towards colour schemes and music, and their satisfaction and a positive word of mouth as well.

- Colour in marketing

Khattak, Ali, Khan and Shah (2018) state that 62 to 90% of a product assessment is based on colours alone. According to them colours play an important role in marketing. Moreover colour psychology in marketing is not new (Karthikeyan and Joy, 2018). Labrecque, Patrick and Milne (2013), on the other hand observed that many disciplines such as neuroscience, psychophysics, visual cognition, and biology have used new technologies to gain insights in understanding the complexities of color perception, but there existed relatively little research in the field of marketing.Kumar (2017) discussed the role of colour in matching brand personality and customer personality. Halkiopoulos,

Antonopoulou, Gkintoni and Koumparelis (2021) observed that colour is an integral part of marketing, and the manner in which it affects one's psychology depends on many factors e.g., genes, environment, social context and demographic factors like gender, age and education level.

- Emotions and Consumer Behaviour

Majeed, Lu and Usman (2017) studied the consumption behaviour of women consumers, and observed that showbiz celebrities expressing the emotion of happiness with music and colour had the most effect on women consumption behaviour.

Classification of Literature Review: A broad classification of the previous papers is given as follows:

1. Focus of the paper
    - Color scheme
    - Emotion
    - Purchase decision
    - Product packaging and brand recall
2. Context of the paper
    - Indian
    - Foreign
3. Type of Data for analysis
    - Qualitative
    - Quantitative
4. Research Design
    - Exploratory
    - Descriptive
    - Analytical

Title ***Author(s) (Year)***	**Category**	**Focus Issue**			**Context**		**Data Type**		**Methodology**		
		Colour scheme	**emotions**	**Purchase decision**	**Indian**	**Foreign**	**Qualitative**	**Quantitative**	**Exploratory**	**Descriptive**	**Analytical**
The colour red for emotion in cross-cultural e-commerce. Broeder, P., & Wildeman, N. ()2020	Research paper	✓	✓			✓		✓			✓
Light colors and comfortable warmth: Crossmodal correspondences between thermal sensations and color lightness influence consumer behavior. Motoki, K., Saito, T., Nouchi, R., Kawashima, R., & Sugiura, M. (2019).	Research Paper	✓				✓		✓			✓
Colour in online advertising: Going for trust, which blue is a must? Broeder, P., & Snijder, H. (2019).	Research paper	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		
The impact of product's packaging color on customers' buying preferences under time pressure. Javed, S. A., & Javed, S. (2015).	Research Paper	✓		✓		✓		✓			✓

On the multiple effects of packaging colour on consumer behaviour and product experience in the 'food and beverage'and 'home and personal care'categories. Spence, C., & Velasco, C. (2018).	Review paper	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		
The role of package color in influencing purchase intent of bottled water: Implications for SMEs and entrepreneurs. Beneke, J., Mathews, O., Munthree, T., & Pillay, K. (2015)	Research paper	✓		✓	✓		✓				✓
Investigating the importance of website colour contrast in E- and MCommerce. Pelet, J. E. (2015).	Review article	✓		✓	✓		✓				✓
Healthy package, healthy product? Effects of packaging design as a function of purchase setting. Van Rompay, T. J., Deterink, F., & Fenko, A. (2016).	Research paper	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		
Role color plays in influencing consumer behaviour. Rupa Rathee, Pallavi Rajain. (2019).	Research article	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	
Colour psychology in Marketing. Dr. Sajid rehman khattak, Yasir Khan Khalil,	Research article		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		

Mukharif Shah. (2018)											
Current Research Development- Impact of colour on marketing. Satyendra singh. (2006)	Research paper	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	
Moderating effects of situational characteristics on impulse buying. Hyo Jung Chang, Ruoh-Nan Yan and Molly Ecknean, (2013).	Research paper		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
The Marketer's Prismatic Palette: A Review of Colour Research and Future Directions. Lawren I. Labrecque, Vanessa M. Patrick, George R. Milne. (2013)	Research paper	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		
Colour research in Marketing :Theoretical and consideration for conducting rigorous and impactful color research . Labrecque(2020).	Research article	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓
Coloring consumer`s psychology using different shades the role of perception of colors by consumers in consumer decision making process: a micro study of select departmental stores in Mumbai city, India Daivata Patil (2012)	Research paper	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		

An analytical view on color influencing consumer: paper advertisement - a study in Pune region Prof. Dr. Vishal Pandurang Raut (2017).	Research paper	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	
Psychology of Colors in Marketing. A Data Analysis of Greek Historical Advertisements. Halkiopoulos , C., Antonopoulou, H., Gkintoni , E., Koumparelis, (2021)	Research paper	✓				✓		✓			✓
An Exploratory study on Colour Psychology In Marketing: A techno-leadership Perspective. Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan Ms. Reeja Joy, (2018)	Research paper	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
The influence of emotional response to interior color on restaurant entry decision. Warakul Tantanatewin, Vorapat Inkarojrit, (2018).	Research paper	✓	✓			✓		✓			✓
Examining the relationships between online store atmospheric color, flow experience and consumer behaviour. Saïd Aboubaker Ettis. (2017)	Research article	✓		✓		✓		✓			✓
Consumers' perception of usability of product packaging and impulse buying: considering consumers' mood	Research article	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	

and time pressure as moderating variables. Manijeh Bahraini, Azadeh Rajabi (2018)											
Want to make me emotional? The influence of emotional advertisements on women's consumption behaviour . Salman Majeed, Changbao Lu and Muhammad Usman (2017)	Research paper	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
Linking atmospherics to shopping outcomes: The role of the desire to stay. Maher Georges Elmashhara, Ana Maria Soares (2022)	Research paper	✓		✓		✓		✓			✓
Effect of store Atmosphere on Consumer Purchase Intention . Riaz Hussain and Mazhar Ali(2015)	Research paper	✓		✓		✓		✓			✓
The psychology of clothing: Meaning of colors, body image and gender expression in fashion. Duje KODZOMAN (2019).	Scientific review	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		
The Psychology of Colour Influences consumers' Buying Behaviour- A Diagnostic study J Suresh Kumar (2017).	Research paper		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		
The Influence of Atmospherics General Interior Variables on Shoppers'	Research paper	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	

emotions and behaviour. Maher Georges Elmashhara ,Ana Maria Soares (2019).											

Research gap

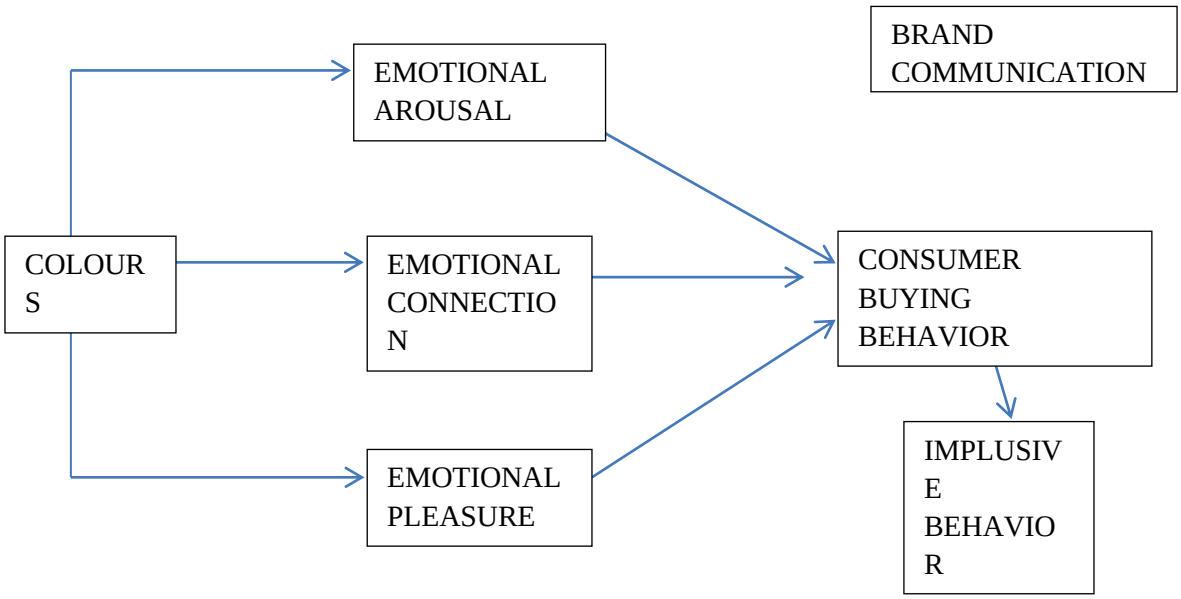
The present section identifies research gaps associated with the theme of colour psychology and consumer buying behaviour, especially with a focus on the apparel industry. According to Karthikeyan & Joy (2018), studies on the "impact of colour on human functioning has had fairly limited achievements. Some more systematic empirical studies in the field appeared at the end of the last century; however, many of them suffer from methodological shortcomings and fail to encompass a correlational analysis which is a norm in modern psychology".

The researcher could not find any paper which has investigated the association between colours and impulse buying with specific reference to the apparel industry.

Further, it was also stated by Broeder & Wildeman (2020) that it would be interesting to understand whether the techniques of neuro-imaging would be helpful in recognizing the various mechanism of colour packaging.

2. Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual framework is presented for the study



Hypothesis Development

Based on the conceptual framework, the following hypotheses are proposed for the study:

$H_0$1: Emotional Connection due to colors does not have a significant relationship with the impulsive buying behavior of consumers

$H_0$2: Brand communications established due to colors does not have a significant relationship with the

impulsive buying behavior of consumers

$H_0$3: Emotional pleasure due to colors does not have a significant relationship with the impulsive buying behavior of consumers

$H_0$4: Emotional arousal due to colors does not have a significant relationship with the impulsive buying behavior of consumers

$H_0$5: Preference for the colors does not have a significant relationship with the impulsive buying behavior of consumers

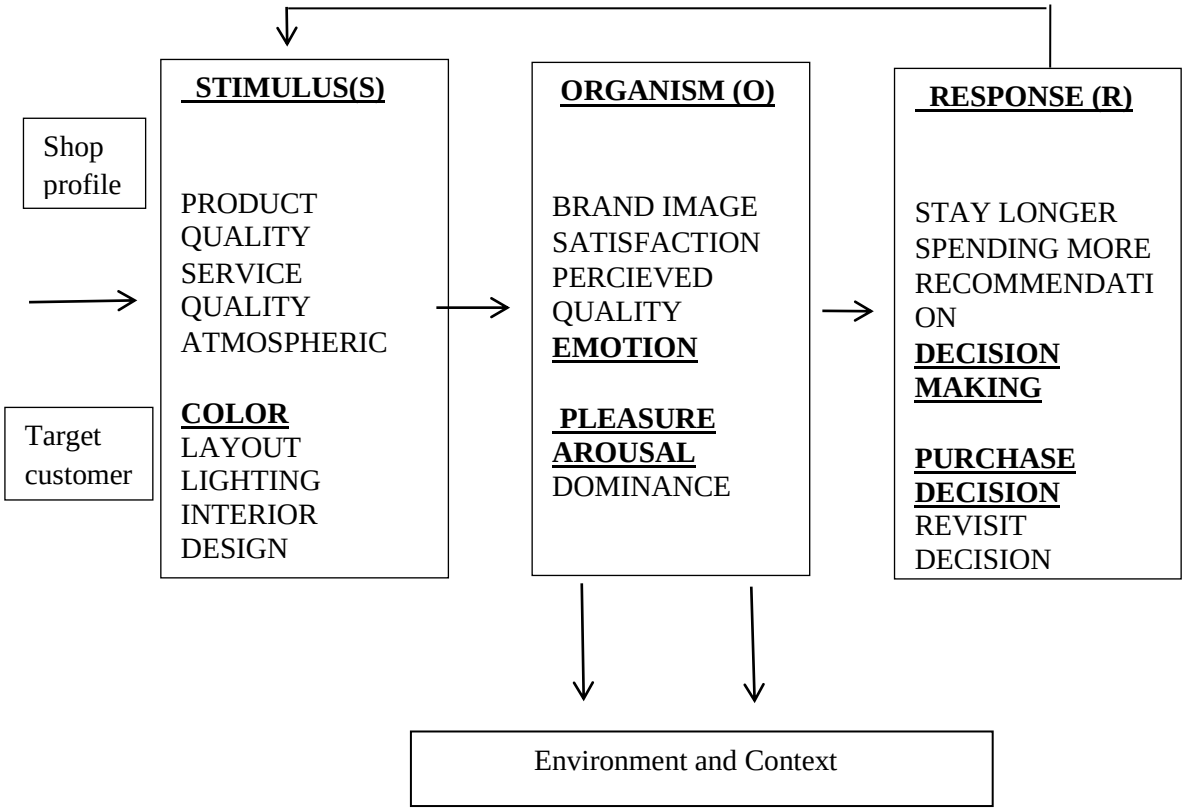


FIGURE 2 -BASIC MODEL OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

3. Overview of Proposed Research

4.1 Need of the Study

Colour is an important aspect of building a brand for any marketer, be it the colour of the product, logo, or name. Based on the review of prior studies and gaps identified, it is observed that there is no clarity on whether the use of colour has any impact on the impulse consumer purchasing decisions and what that effect is configured off. Therefore, it is essential to understand the influence of triggers through color when applied for different products and their exact impact on the buying behaviour of

the consumer. The consumer's preferences on the basis of colour of packaging or setting of product can be identified through this study by assessing the role of color in stimulating the senses of consumers and effect on their buying behaviour.

4.2 Objectives of the Study s

The main aim of the study is to assess the role of colors used for sensory marketing from a psychological perspective and the significant impact of colors in influencing consumer behavior in an impulsive way specifically. The further objectives of the study are:

- To understand the significant role of colour utilization as a marketing element in the apparel industry.
- To investigate the way colour triggers the stimuli and its psychological impact on the process of consumer shopping behaviour for apparels
- To analyse the relationship between the attributes related to colour psychology when used as marketing element, and impulsive consumer buying behaviour

4.3 Research Methodology

4.3.1 Scope of the Study

The proposed research is empirical in nature. It is focused on analyzing the impulsive consumer buying behaviour of retail consumers in Agra city with respect to apparels. The study is both qualitative and quantitative. The deductive reasoning approach will be employed in this study since it allows for the description of causal linkages between the identified variables as well as the quantitative measurement of those correlations.

4.3.2 Sample plan

In context to this study, the study population is consumers of the apparel segment . The sample size is chosen as per the needs of the study. For sampling, non-probability sampling technique will be adopted.

For sample size computation Gordon formula is used -

Taking a statistical approach to calculate sample size(n) of the infinite population (more than 50,000) through precision rate and confidence level approach is used to arrive at a representative number of respondents when population estimate is unknown (Gordon, 2004). Population , the various

quantitative measures to be considered are as follows:

a) Degree of the variability of population characteristics or standard deviation (σ).

b)Level of confidence desired or Z value

c)Degree of precision desired in estimating population characteristics.

According to **Bill Gordon Formula**, the formula generally applied for sampling is

$$n= \sigma\ 2\ Z2/D2$$

here n is referred to as the sufficient sample size required,

σ = The Approximate value of the standard deviation of the sample is taken as 1.

Z = Standard normal variation or Z value is taken as 1.96 for 95% confidence level desired

D is taken as 0.1 to ensure a high degree of precision.

$$n = 1\ 2\ (1.96)2\ /(0.1)2 =384$$

In the current research, based on the targeted population, a moderately large sample size is identified and this requires statistical calculation for adequate sample size. Here, the study population considered is approximately 50,000. Based on the sample size calculation, the sample estimated for the study is about 384.

4.3.3 Data collection

The primary goal of the research technique is to make data collection from the existing market setting easier. The **primary data collection approach** would be employed to meet the current research objectives. The primary data in the context of this study is collected via the interfaces with the consumers in the retail sector.

4.3.4 Tools and techniques to be used

For primary data collection, a **questionnaire-based survey method** will be employed. The quantitative data collected will be analyzed by making use of several statistical tools as part of data analysis

5. Proposed Chapterization

The comprehensive thesis structure constituted within this study is shown as below:

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Chapter 2 - Literature Review and Theoretical Orientation

Chapter 3 - Research Methodology

Chapter 4 – Findings and Analysis

Chapter 6 - Conclusions and recommendations

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Annexures

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